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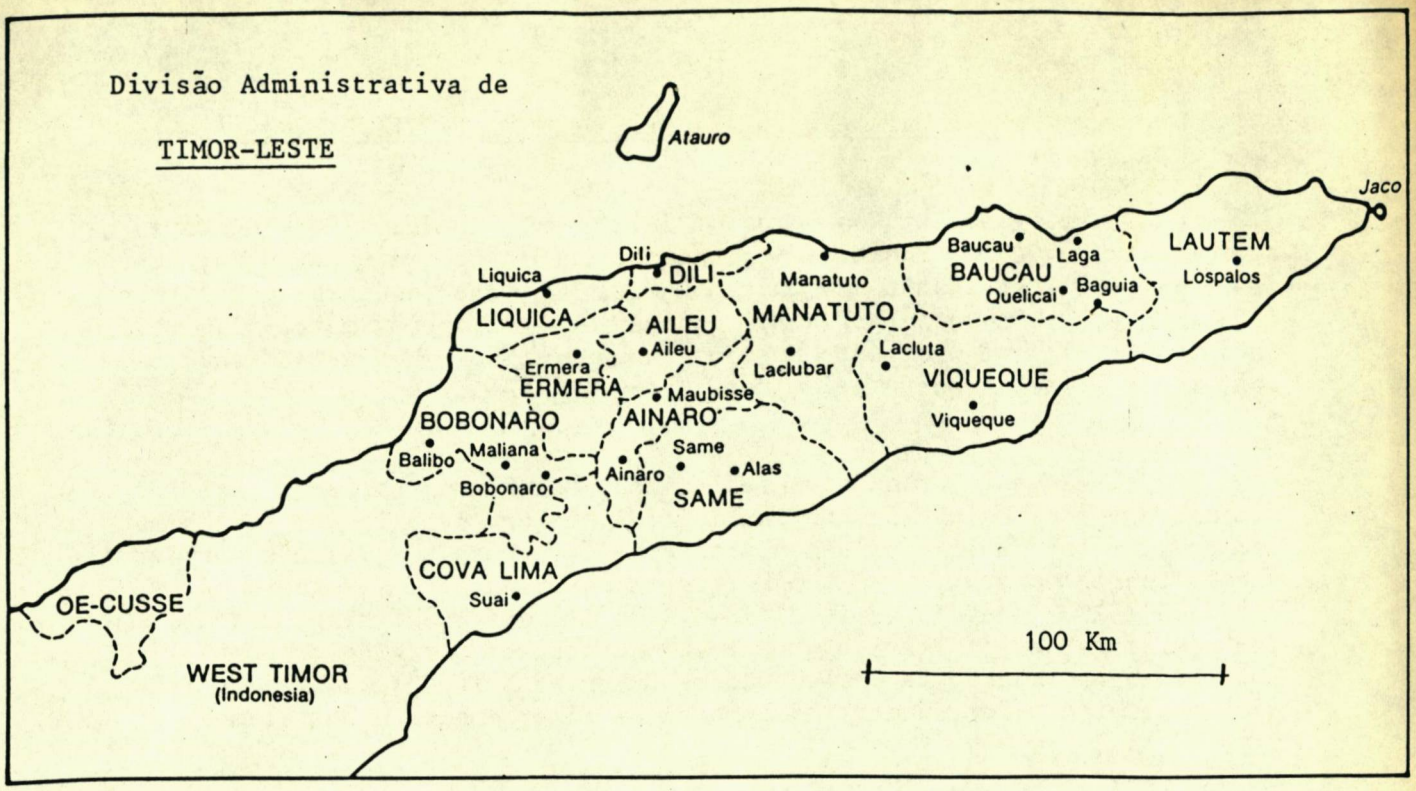

EAST TIMOR

EIGHT YEARS OF GENOCIDE AND RESISTANCE AGAINST THE INDONESIAN OCCUPATION FORCES

1.- General Data and Political Evolution until July, 1975

2.- The UDT Coup, the Counter-coup and the Invasion by Indonesian Forces

3.- The Evolution of the Situation in East Timor from December, 1975 until March, 1983

4.- The Conferences of March, 1983, the Cease-fire and the Return to War

(Synthesis and follow-up to the book, East Timor: Message to the Living)

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2

1.- GENERAL DATA AND POLITICAL EVOLUTION UNTIL JULY, 1975

East Timor, with an area of 18,899 km^2, in July 1975, numbered approximately 700,000 inhabitants, one-fourth of whom were Catholic, approximately 2,400 Protestants and only 350 Muslims. The remaining population were animists. On the other hand, Indonesia, with approximately 140 million inhabitants, 80-90% of whom were Muslims and only 4% of whom were Catholics, was, and is, the largest Muslim population in the world.

Because Timor had not felt either the Hindu influence that dominated the principal Indonesian islands at the beginning of the Christian era, or the Muslim influence that spread through the islands during the fifteenth century, when the Portuguese arrived at Timor (between 1512 and 1520), they found it divided into two different kingdoms: the confederation of Serviāo, under the control of the King of Sombay, corresponding roughly to what would be Dutch West Timor; and the confederation of the Belos, under the control of King Behale in East Timor.

In the third quarter of the sixteenth century, friars Dominican order was established, thus solidifying the Portuguese presence in the area. In 1651, the Dutch occupied the city of Kupang and began settling in the western half of the island. In 1859, a treaty signed between Holland and Portugal established the border between Portuguese Timor (East Timor) and Dutch Timor (West Timor).

In 1945, the former Dutch East Indies declared their independence and became the Republic of Indonesia, of which West Timor is a part. Between 1945 and June 1974, the Indonesian government consistently affirmed to the United Nations and elsewhere that they had no territorial claims on East Timor.

In May 1974, shortly after the Portuguese Revolution of April 25, two parties firmly based on popular support were created:

-UDT (União Democrática Timorense), which began by favoring a federation with Portugal, then demanding independence and finally by requesting integration with Indonesia;

-ASDT (Associação Social-Democrática Timorense), which has always strived for independence and which, in September 1974 became FRETILIN (Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente).

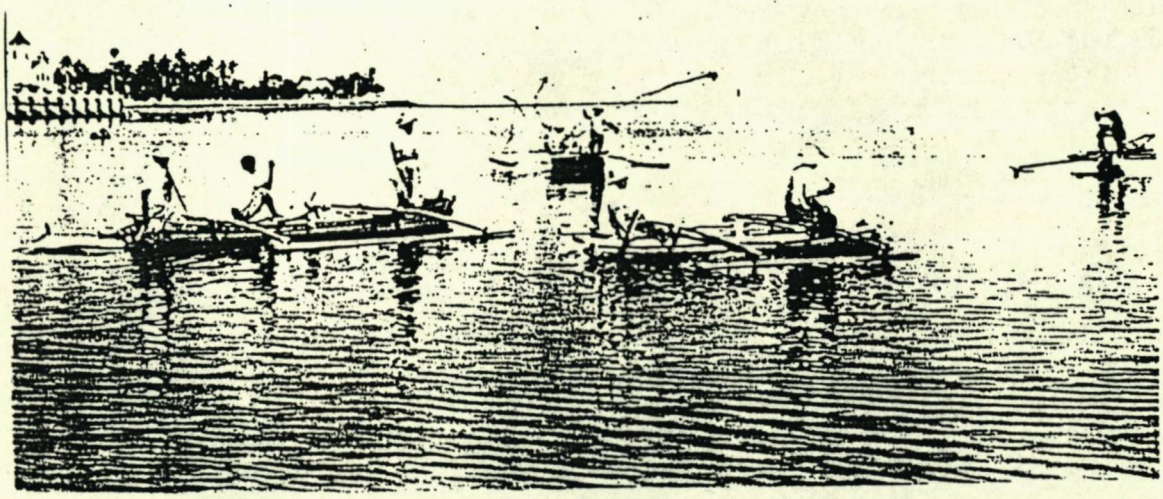
Under pressure from Indonesian authorities, the APODETI (Associação Popular Democrática de Timor), which favored integration with Indonesia but had little popular support, was created. Other small, insignificant parties, namely KOTA and the Partido Trabalhista, emerged in 1975.

On January 21, 1975, the leaders of UDT and FRETILIN publicly announced the merger of these two parties in order to combine forces towards eventual independence. The Indonesian government regarded this coalition unfavorably, fearing that it would be the shortest path to independence and that this independence would set a bad example for other Indonesian islands. Shortly thereafter, the Indonesian Consul in Timor announced this to the Government of Timor.

With the intention of controlling by dividing, and in order to block the efforts of Governor Lemos Pires, Indonesia sent secret agents to East Timor whose purpose was to pit Fretilin against UDT. At the same time, between threats and promises, Indonesia convinced the leaders of UDT to break the coalition they had made with FRETILIN.

On May 27, 1975, the leaders of UDT, who had recently returned from Indonesia, announced unilaterally the end of that coalition. This was the first step in a conscious and systematic destabilization program backed by Indonesia which finished, several months later, in civil war and finally invasion.

In July 1975, activities leading to a gradual but progressive decolonization under the direction of the Portuguese government, namely in the areas of education and local administration, were taking place.



2.- THE UDT COUP, THE COUNTER-COUP AND THE INVASION BY THE INDONESIAN FORCES

On August 10, 1975, in the district of Lautém, Governor Lemos Pires inaugurated the First Regional Administrative Commission, which had been chosen by popular election. Throughout the whole district, at all levels and in all offices, only one member of the APODETI was elected. The extreme lack of support for the movement to integrate Timor with Indonesia became evident. For Indonesia, it became vital to impede the continuation of these elections, (which were previewed to the thirteen districts of the territory) and which were clearly demonstrating the amount of popular support for the parties striving for independence to foreign observers such as journalists, Australian senators and diplomats.

On the evening of August 10, the leaders of UDT, who had recently returned from another trip to Indonesia, initiated a coup which demanded that the Portuguese Government imprison the leaders of Fretilin. The Governor attempted unsuccessfully to resolve the situation through dialogue, and civil war between UDT and Fretilin, accompanied by the gradual withdrawal of the Portuguese civil administration and military forces, broke out.

At the end of August 1975, Fretilin controlled almost the entire territory. Faced with difficulties in establishing formal negotiations, on November 28, 1975, they unilaterally declared independence, an action which was rapidly recognized by twelve countries, but not recognized by Portugal, Indonesia or the United Nations.

On November 29, 1975, the opposition parties of UDT, Apodeti, Kota and Partido Trabalhista declared the integration of Timor into the Republic of Indonesia, an action which was also not recognized by either Portugal or the United Nations.

On December 7, 1975, the Indonesian forces occupied the capital city of Dili, created a provisionary government there within ten days and began a systematic and massive invasion. The provisionary government created a People's Representative Assembly of 28 members who were not elected but chosen by the occupation forces, and who requested from President Suharto the integration of East Timor into Indonesia. This request was unanimously accepted on July 17, 1976 by the Indonesian Parliament and East Timor was considered as the twenty-seventh province of Indonesia. At that time, Fretilin controlled approximately 85% of the territory, an area in which lived three-fourths of the population.

The Portuguese Constitution of April 1976, as well as the revision of 1982, clearly declared in Article 297:

"Portugal continues bound to its incumbent responsibilities in harmony with international law, to promote and guarantee the right of East Timor to independence."

Indonesia has sent tens of thousands of soldiers and sophisticated military equipment including air, sea and ground forces to fight a harsh war in which they have met strong resistance from the people of East Timor, organized by Fretilin. In spite of a lack of equipment and a total maritime blockade imposed by Indonesia, they have resisted and continue to resis after eight long years.

It is difficult to know how many people have already died as the result of the Indonesian aggression, due to the fact that international organizations have been almost totally prevented from entering into the territory. The killing of five Australian journalists in Balibó, near the Indonesian-Timor border, in October 1975, and of another sixth in Dili in December of the same year, prevented the world from knowing the extent of the tragedy. Certain information which has penetrated the blockade indicates that from December 1975 to December 1982, 200,000 to 300,000 people, or from 25 to 50% of the population died either in the war or from starvation provoked by the war.

6

3.- THE EVOLUTION OF THE SITUATION IN EAST TIMOR FROM DECEMBER, 1975 UNTIL MARCH, 1983

The struggle and resistance to occupation has passed through many phases from the invasion of Dili on December 7, 1975 until the conferences between the commanders-in-chief of the Timor and Indonesian troops from March 20 to March 23, 1983. Three phases can be roughly defined:

Phase One: December, 1975 until mid-1978

Due to their incredible military superiority, the Indonesian generals expected that they would completely control the entire territory in a few days. But the determination of the people of East Timor, who had law and justice on their side, combined with the huge cultural and historical differences which separated them from their invaders, made it possible for Fretilin to control 70 to 85% of the territory, an area inhabited by the majority of the population, for three years.

For the price of many masscres, assassinations, prisoners and deportations, Indonesia managed to control Dili, the north coast and several of the major cities in the interior. The number of deaths on both sides was high, especially among the civil population and Indonesian military. According to statements by father Leoneto do Rego, who lived in the interior zones controlled by Fretilin until mid-1978, the war was hardly felt in these areas.

Phase Two: Mid-1978 to End-1981

Beginning in September 1977, Indonesia began systematically bombing all living things, killing men, women and children and destroying plants and animals in the areas controlled by Fretilin. Using American-made planes designed for anti-guerilla combat, British planes designed for terrestrial attack, and French helicopters spraying napalm, defoliants and other sorts of modern technological warfare, the Indonesians managed to cause wide-spread famine, and to massacre or leave homeless entire communities and Fretilin armed forces, also known as Falintil. Beginning in mid-1978, even the Fretilin leadership advised a large part of the population to turn itself in. The death of President Nicolau Lobato, who died in combat on December 31, 1978 near Dili, was a hard blow for the resistance forces, who were enduring extreme difficulties at that time. Dividing into small groups, Falintil adopted guerilla tactics.

1979 was a year in which, despite extreme weakness, famine and suffering, the resistance continued active. The abuses practiced by the occupying forces, including looting, rape, torture, unexplained disappearance and assassinations, especially of those who knew how to read and write, as mentioned in the 'Report from This Sad Captivity' sent by a missionary from Timor, and numerous massacres committed by the Indonesian troops, fed the revolt among the repressed and aroused even some of the most loyal occupying troops and defenders of the integration of the territory with Indonesia to show their anger. In June 1981, several members of the 'Regional Assembly of East Timor' sent a report to President Suharto in which they accused the Indonesian troops of behaving like "conquerors in a conquered land", and protested the numerous cases of rape, torture and assassination.

Following a succession of large-scale military operations, one of which was called 'perang terakhir' - final war or decisive operation, the Indonesian generals launched an enormous offensive which covered the entire territory. Beginning in September 1981, in one attempt to completely eliminate the guerilla troops of East Timor, the Indonesian forces mobilized a large part of the population of the occupied zone, men between the ages of 15 and 55, and often women and children, in an attempt to construct a human barrier of protection for the several thousand Indonesian soldiers who, leaving from various sites around the island, would sweep it from one end to the other.

Because the popular support of the guerillas was responsible for the low number of guerilla prisoners and deaths, the Indonesians, in a desperate attempt to dominate through terror, began a series of barbaric massacres in which they assassinated not only men, but also the aged, children, women and fetuses which they ripped from their mothers' stomachs.

8

The principal results of this terrible occupation, whose code name was 'Operasi Keamanan' or 'Operation Security' and which lasted for several months, was in addition to the numerous massacres, a high number of deaths by starvation either during the campaign or when the people had to return to their homes, and an even stronger revolt of the populace against the occupation.

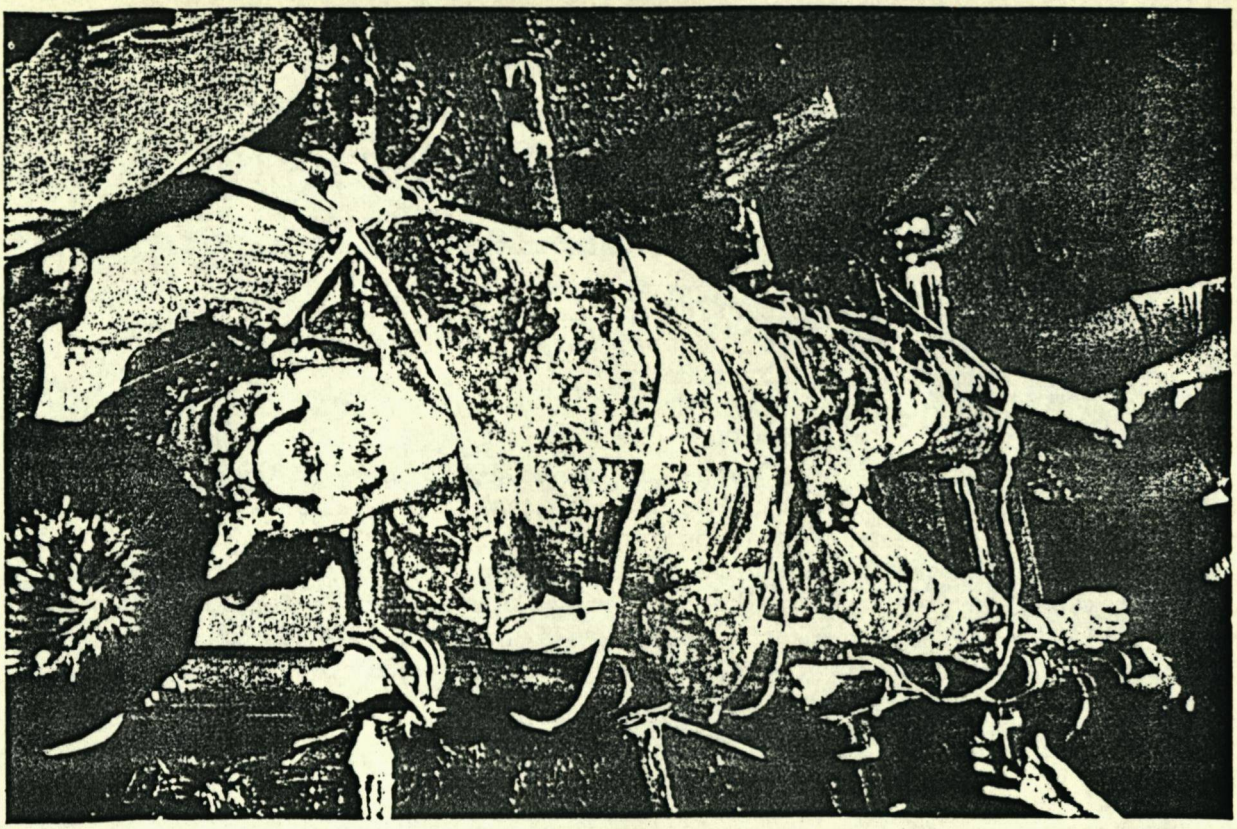
A well-substantiated report called 'Testimony of a Missionary' and written during this horrid and revolting period was later sent out of the country. On October 28, 1981, this missionary, before describing one of the massacres, wrote about the Indonesian troops: "They consider the war as lost, but nevertheless they continue exhibiting their war-like strengths. With respect to the people, the rejection is complete. From the beginning of the invasion, they have suffered all sorts of insults. They know they have completely lost the support of the people. Desperate, they experiment with the entire range of terror in an attempt to dominate theirvictims."

Some of these massacres were clearly and openly denounced by Monsignor Martinho Lopes, Apostolic Administrator of Dili, in sermons and at religious gatherings. The concern with which the majority of the missionaries and Catholic priests accompanied these reports and the defense of their people against the injustices, humiliations and massacres caused many Timorenses to seek out the protection of the church. Instead of conversion to Islam, which the invaders so often encouraged with offers of food, employment and all sorts of facilities, during these years of suffering it has been noticed that the number of Catholics and especially the overall percentage of Catholics, has increased considerably. Today, perhaps half or even more of the population of Timor is Catholic.

Phase Three: End of 1981 to March, 1983

Tired of so much suffering but even more tired of those who made them suffer, the poeple of East Timor continued developing clandestine strategies in the concentration camps and in the controlled areas where the Indonesian forces obliged them to live. At the same time, Fretilin, who had also suffered numerous losses, especially among their leaders, was in the process of reorganizing.

Thus, following the campaign of 1981, the guerilla activities, instead of diminishing, actually increased and culminated in the occupation of five Timor villages by Fretilin at the end of February, 1983, and in violent fighting during the night of February 26 in the area of the villages of Aileu, Same, Suai, Viqueque and Lospalos. These operations involved approximately 2,500 Fretilin guerillas and had a major effect on demoralizing the occupying troops.



4.- THE CONFERENCES OF MARCH 1983, THE CEASE-FIRE AND THE RETURN TO WAR

4.1.- The context of the talks and the interpretation by the Portuguese media and politicians

The forementioned actions of the Fretilin guerillas against the occupation forces had such a demoralizing effect on the already unmotivated Indonesian army that on March 14, 1983, the well-known Australian newspaper The Canberra Times, in a headline to an article from their Jakarta correspondent Gilles Bertin, wrote: "Popular Support for Guerillas Increasing: Indonesia Losing Fight in East Timor."

Some days later, between March 20 and March 23, 1983, Colonel Purwanto, Commander-in-chief of the Indonesian forces in Timor, and the commander-in-chief of the Falantil, Xanana Gusmão, began conversations and agreed to a cease-fire.

These conversations, held at the request of the Indonesians and following instructions from the Indonesian Minister of Defense General Yusuf, took place in an area controlled by Fretilin, not in Baucau as the occupying forces requested. On the tent where they were held was written: RDTL (República Democrática de Timor-Leste). And covering the negotiations table was a single flag, that of Fretilin. Many pictures and eye-witness accounts confirm these facts.

10 April

In spite of all these signs clearly indicating the strong position of the Fretilin at these meetings, and in spite of the fact that the Portuguese media had access, at a press conference, and from Monsignor Martinho Lopes, to the most important information and documents that confirmed these facts, they preferred to publicize false information spread by Indenosian propaganda suggesting that it was a Fretilin surrender. Some newspapers even said that Xanana had already accepted a house, a car and a job as a public employee in Dili, all offered by the Indonesian authorities.

Similar to what has been happening since 1974, some of the most important Portuguese politicians seem to believe the Indonesian propaganda more readily than information from other sources such as the Catholic ones. Apparently they are still not aware of the system of counter-information provided by the occupying forces, or the fertility and daring with which the Jakarta generals lie. Apparently their politic of defeat appears to be based on the Indonesian theories.

After eight years of occupation of a territory that is still under Portuguese administration according to International Law, the Charter and Resolutions of the United Nations and the Portuguese Constitution, the various Portuguese governments had not gone to the trouble to be seriously informed about conditions in East Timor. They had neither defined or executed a policy coherent with national dignity, law and justice that would take into account the human and political rights of East Timor, nor defended, at medium or long range, the stability of the area.

Some Portuguese politicians believed so completely the Indonesian propaganda surrounding the 'Fretilin surrender' that they were surprised when told that in case Indonesia did not fulfill the promises made during those conversations, and it was probable that they would not, the war would begin again.

As a matter of fact, as affirmed privately and publicly, namely in interviews on Portuguese radio stations, some time later the war, with its resultant imprisonments, deportations, murders, bombings and massacres, recommenced.

4.2.- Why were the conversations of 1983 held?

Apparently Indonesia felt that in 1982, any motion regarding Timor would be defeated in the United Nations. If that had happened, they would have been able to maintain the domination of the territory free from diplomatic pressure. Instead, the General Assembly of the United Nations approved a resolution on East Timor that year. This

approval was partially thanks to the actions of the Portuguese Parliamentary Commission on East Timor that forced the Portuguese Government to finally develop an intense although somewhat poorly-prepared and tardy diplomatic action. Besides that, some months later, in February 1983, the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva approved another resolution condemning Indonesia.

President Suharto's visit to the United States in October 1982 spoiled instead of improved his image because journalists wouldn't stop asking questions about the violations of human rights in East Timor. Worse than that, in March 1983, the Australian Labor Party won their elections. This party had promised that if they won, they would stop supporting Indonesia's policy toward East Timor and would begin supporting the right of the people of Timor to self-determination at the United Nations.

Internationally, therefore, Indonesia needed to appear more flexible and ready to discuss in order to reduce the problem. Internally, the demoralization of the soldiers corresponded to the conviction of some generals that the war could not be won militarily. Consequently, they were interested in pursuing the course of dialogue and political negotiation.

It was likely that the Indonesian leaders would concede to East Timor an autonomy similar to the one they had granted the territory of Sulawesi. In this way they would save face and national unity. They could then even promote a 'popular balloting' that would throw sand in the face of the world and would allow them to declare that the people of East Timor had freely chosen integration with Indonesia. To the Fretilin leaders who would accept this solution, they would readily offer houses, cars, jobs and much more...

If Fretilin did not accept that solution, Indonesia would begin the war again, meanwhile gaining two advantages:

--On one hand, an international image of openness that would win votes in the United Nations and modify the position of the Australian Labor Party and other governments that opposed their politics towards East Timor.

--On the other hand, weaken the actual resistance by allowing the enemies the comforts of peace and a certain freedom of movement for several months.

Naturally Fretilin wanted to end the terrible war that had decimated the Maubere people and to negotiate a solution that would guarantee simultaneously their independence and the establishment

12

of a relationship based on cooperation with their powerful neighbor.

Fretilin, for its part, would agree not to support any self-determination movements in the other Indonesian islands and not to undermine the unity or internal stability of Indonesia. Fretilin wanted Indonesia to communicate to the General Secretary of the United Nations the beginning of the conferences. They also listed four conditions based on international law for a political solution:

1.- Total and unconditional withdrawal of the Indonesian troops;

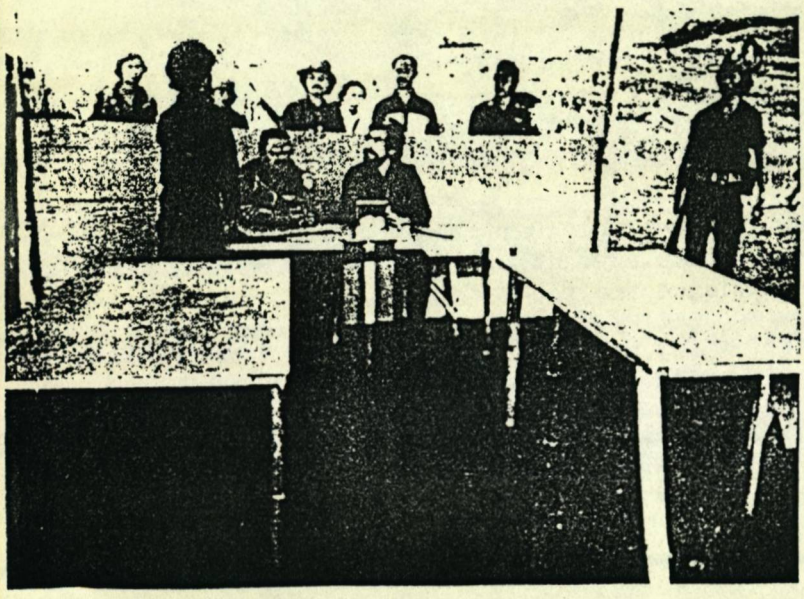
2.- The formation of a multinational force to be stationed in East Timor, to supervise the orderly withdrawal of the Indonesian armed forces and to establish a transitional administration;

3.- Placement of Falintil in sparsely populated areas in order to guarantee:

4.- The organization of free and democratic referendums.

We can also imagine that Fretilin planned additional activities during these conferences, such as taking advantage of the cease-fire to send out important documents concerning their struggle, and re-establishing contacts outside the territory. Internally, they could use the time to reorganize and redistribute their forces.

In order to insure that the conferences indicated their continuing adherence to the principle of independence for which hundreds of thousands of Timorenses had already died, the Fretilin carefully surrounded the conference sites with their symbols, the initials RDTL and the Fretilin flag, as already mentioned.



4.3- The breakdown of contact with the outside world and the return to war

While on one hand, Indonesia seemed to be softening and to favor dialogue, on the other hand, they were trying to destroy the East Timor connections with the outsdie world in order to be able to imprison, deport, destroy and massacre more easily.

The most embarrassing testimony was that of the Apostolic Administrator, Monsignor Martinho Lopes, whom the Timorense called their bishop. It seems that the Indonesians had thought of physically eliminating him as they did the six Australian journalists at the end of 1975. But the enormous prestige that he enjoyed among his people and his position with the Catholic church would certainly provoke strong reactions, even if the murder could be disguised as an accident. Consequently, it was decided that the best solution was to try to relocate him professionally. The Apostolic Nuncio of Jakarta, Monsignor Pablo Puente, who was eager to maintain and improve relations with the most populous Islamic country in the world, played a part in this scheme. Good relations could benefit the Catholic minority and Catholic institutions in Indonesia.

Familiar with the methods of the Java regime, which had not hesitated to kill almost a million communists, PKI sympathizers and poor farmers when they tried to consolidate their power after the coup d'etat of 1965, the Vatican, like other states and even Portuguese leaders, seemed willing to agree with the government of Jakarta if a minimum of human rights were respected and considerable autonomy, although still in the context of the Indonesian nation, were given to the territory of East Timor.

But the people of Timor knew that promises of great autonomy had already been made to the UDT in 1975 and were blatant lies that had first served to use the UDT as a destabilizing force and later to cover up the invasion of the territory.

Besides, the Maubere people, who were suffering hunger, deportations and many other cruelties realized how impossible social intercourse with the occupying forces in the context of a supposed integration would be. Therefore their sense of nationality, forged through centuries of history and various colonizations continued to grow stronger.

The majority of the priests and clergy that were in Timor, living and suffering with their people, knew that. Therefore, they didn't attend the inauguration of Monsignor Ximenes Belo as the new Apostolic Administrator of the diocese of Dili. Only two priests attended. The others not only were absent, but were careful to explain clearly the reasons for their absence. They didn't agree that a priest

14 April

who had lived so closely with his worshippers, who had known and visited and tried at all costs to protect them, had been replaced by a much younger and less capable priest who had been living outside East Timor, far from his roots and who had even accepted an Indonesian passport to return to East Timor.

By the substitution of Monsignor Martinho Lopes, one of the most important channels to the outside world was eliminated. The Indonesians must have thought this because from him have come some of the most complete and accurate reports that have penetrated through the black curtain of silence that has enclosed East Timor since December, 1975.

And if that was not already enough, the occupation forces created such difficulties for the tiny delegation of the International Red Cross that they were obliged to withdraw from the territory. By forcing the return of some Timorense students who were studying in Jakarta and by imprisoning some of these students and other people with a bit of education, the Indonesians expected that total silence would be imposed over East Timor.

But even then, they weren't successful. Even Monsignor Ximenes Belo, faced with the cruel reality of the situation, couldn't remain silent. In spite of the total blockade of the island, news announcing the complete massacre of two villages by the Indonesian army and the protests of the new Apostolic administration against the searching of churches by political forces, and the threatening of priests, reached the outside. Once Monsignor Martinho Lopes was gone, the occupying forces thought it would be easier to silence or even remove other Catholic priests.

While Indonesia was sending 50,000 new soldiers to East Timor, the Maubere resistance annihilated a company of elite troops commanded by Suharto's son-in-law, Major Prabowo, who was seriously wounded in an attack near Dili. It was war again, difficult on both sides, despite the imbalance of forces.

Faced with the horrible methods employed by the Indonesian occupants and the silence of so many important people, we ask: Is it necessary for the genocide of the East Timor people to be complete in order to make national, political and religious leaders wake up to this carnage?

When will reason be more important than geographical situation and raw force?

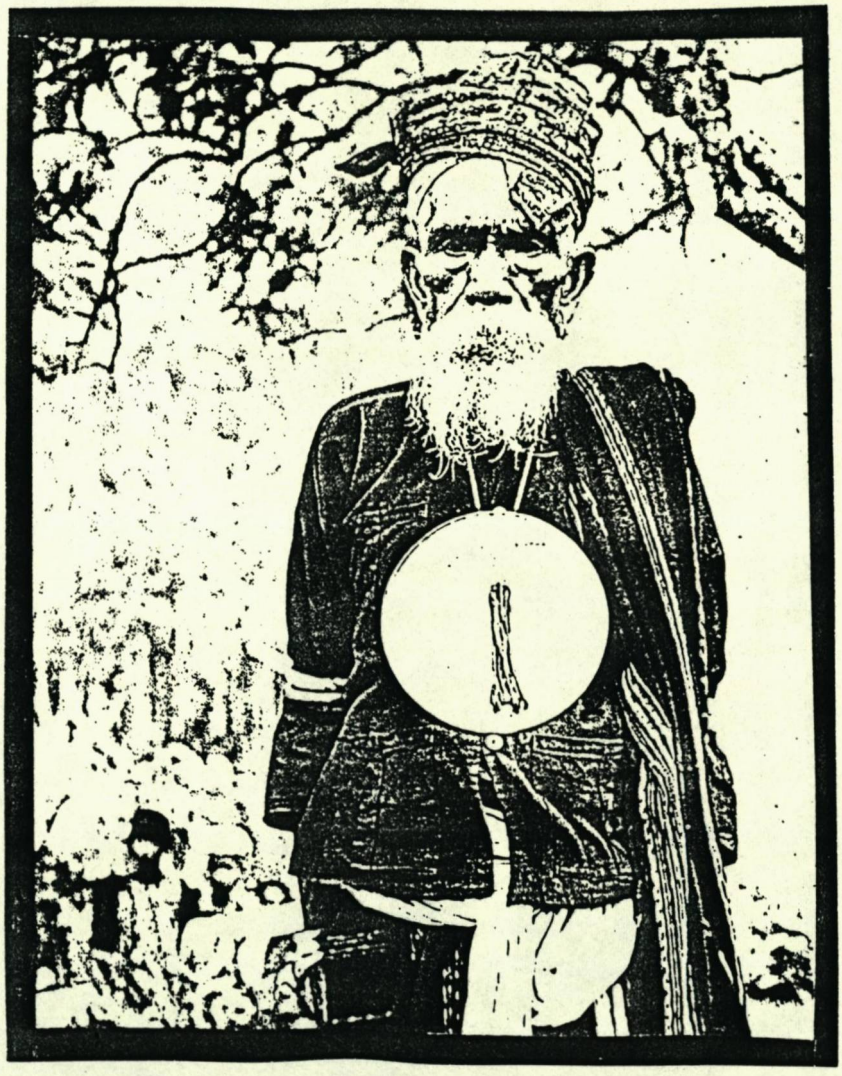
How long are we going to ignore justice, international law, national dignity and our own consciences in order not to disturb the powerful and not trouble their "empires"?

Politicians insensitive to the shouts of pain of the Timorense people are not even willing to see their determination and force in spite of the oppression they suffer.

Without pretending to throw stones at anyone and trying to understand the logic of statesmen, even of the Indonesian generals and politicians, it is time to say: Enough!

After eight years of war and before total genocide, it is time to break the complacent silence, stop the ineffective and tepid politics and fight for the rights and justice that are due these people to whom Portugal still has the greatest responsibility.

It is a time of hope!



Note: The pictures of the massacres and the meetings were taken from the book Fretilin Conquers the Right to Dialogue, edited by Fretilin and published in Lisbon, July 1983.